

**A FAULT TOLERANT STORAGE SYSTEM HAVING AN INTERCONNECTION
FABRIC THAT ALSO CARRIES NETWORK TRAFFIC**

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A networked system includes a fault tolerant storage system (FTSS) having an interconnection fabric that also carries network traffic. A plurality of servers are coupled to an FTSS via an FTSS interconnection fabric. As soon as a packet is received from a sending node, the packet is committed to reliable, persistent, and fault-tolerant storage media within the FTSS, and will not be lost. If the destination node is one of the servers coupled to the FTSS, the FTSS can send an acknowledgment to the sending node guaranteeing delivery to the destination node, even though the destination node has not yet received the packet. The packet is then transmitted to the receiving node, with the receiving node sending an acknowledgment to the FTSS when the packet has been received successfully. At this point, the FTSS can remove the packet from the storage media, or retain the packet in a packet queue for a period of time to allow an application to reconstruct a network dialog in the event of an error or other type of failure. The present invention also allows packets be routed between servers coupled to the FTSS and nodes coupled to an external network.

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